

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT O 01085 061933Z
ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2267
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PORT OF SPAIN 1085

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CUL, PINT, CU, TD
SUBJECT: TRINIDAD AND THE HAVANA WORLD YOUTH FESTIVAL

REF: STATE 84164

1. THE LEAD ARTICLE IN "TRINIDAD GUARDIAN" OF APRIL 6 QUOTES A "GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL" AS STATING THAT T&T WILL NOT RPT NOT BE REPRESENTED OFFICIALLY AT THE ELEVENTH WORLD FESTIVAL OF YOUTH AND STUDENTS IN HAVANA THIS SUMMER. MOREOVER, THE GOTT HAS TURNED DOWN REQUESTS FROM THE NATIONAL PREPARATORY COMMITTEE (NPC) FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO SEND A CONTINGENT TO THE FESTIVAL. THE OFFICIAL STATED THAT THE FESTIVAL WAS GEARED FOR "SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST" COUNTRIES" AND YOUTH FROM OTHER COUNTRIES WHO CONSIDERED THEMSELVES SOCIALISTS OR COMMUNISTS. T&T DID NOT FIT INTO EITHER CATEGORY AND WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE, ALTHOUGH IF INDIVIDUALS CHOSE TO ATTEND, THAT WAS THEIR BUSINESS. THE OFFICIAL EXPLAINED THAT WHILE THE GOTT BELIEVED IN SOCIAL JUSTICE, THIS GOAL COULD NOT BE ACHIEVED BY THE SHOUTING OF SLOGANS.

2. THE FESTIVAL HAS RECEIVED MODERATE PRESS PLAY
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HERE IN RECENT MONTHS, LARGELY THROUGH THE PUBLICITY AND FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES OF THE NPC. SET UP IN OCTOBER, 1977, NPC CLAIMS TO REPRESENT OVER THIRTY YOUTH AND STUDENTS GROUPS, POLITICAL, CULTURAL AND TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS. ITS ORIGINAL GOAL HAD BEEN TO RAISE ABOUT \$90,000 FOR SENDING 100 DELEGATES TO HAVANA. HOWEVER, FUND-RAISING EFFORTS APPARENTLY

LAGGED, AND TWO NPC REPS SAID AT A PRESS CONFERENCE APRIL 5 THAT 60-65 DELEGATES FROM T&T WERE EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE AND THAT ABOUT \$40,000 WAS REQUIRED FOR THIS PURPOSE. UP TO 50 MORE PEOPLE COULD ATTEND AS TOURISTS AS WELL. THE NPC REPS CONFIRMED THAT APPROACHES TO SEVERAL GOTT BODIES AND GOVERNMENT-RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS FOR FUNDS HAD NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL.

3. COMMENT. WHILE THE GOTT CLEARLY HAS NO USE FOR THE HAVANA FESTIVAL, IT PROBABLY BELIEVES THAT MORE OPEN CRITICISM OF IT WOULD MERELY PLAY INTO THE HANDS OF NPC'S LEFTIST ORGANIZERS. YESTERDAY'S REMARKS BY THE UNNAMED "GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL" APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN THE MINIMUM POSSIBLE RESPONSE TO PUBLIC REQUESTS BY NPC FOR FUNDS AND SUPPORT. DESPITE THIS NO DOUBT COMPLETELY EXPECTED SETBACK, NPC CAN BE COUNTED ON TO STEP UP PUBLICITY AND FUND-RAISING EFFORTS AS THE FESTIVAL APPROACHES. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE THAT THE FESTIVAL WILL GENERATE MUCH INTEREST HERE BEYOND THE ORBIT OF NPC'S PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS, WHOSE MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS ARE NOT SIGNIFICANT.

FOX

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Message Attributes

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